

12534

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

RESTRICTED

Classification changed
 to ~~RESTRICTED~~
 by F. A. [unclear] Lt. Col.
 by P. M. HUGHES, Capt., AG
 Date July 1, 1948

MISSING AIR CREW REPORT

12534

2377

1. ORGANIZATION, Location APO 520, U.S. Army Command or Air Force 15th Air Force
Group 164th Bombardment Group (H) Squadron 776th Bombardment Sqdn (H)
2. SPECIFY Place of departure AAI, Pantanella, Italy Course North-northeast
 Target Vienna, Austria Type of mission Bombing
3. WEATHER CONDITIONS AND VISIBILITY AT TIME OF CRASH OR WHEN LAST REPORTED:
10/10 to 8/10 cumulus, tops 6,000 feet.
4. GIVE: (a) Date 16 Nov 44 Time 1430 Last known position Isle of Pag, Yugoslavia
 (b) Specify whether: Last sighted, Forced down, Seen to crash,
 Last contacted by rad/o, No information.
5. AIRCRAFT [LOST] [BELIEVED LOST] AS A RESULT OF: [Check one only]
 Enemy aircraft, Enemy anti-aircraft, Other Mechanical Failure
6. AIRCRAFT: Type, model & series B-24 J AAF Serial Number 42-51761
7. NICKNAME OF AIRCRAFT None
8. ENGINES: Type, model & series P-1830-65 AAF Serial Number (a) CP 327747
 (b) CP 327561 (c) CP 327728 (d) CP 327468
9. INSTALLED WEAPONS: [Make, type and serial number]
 (a) MG M2 1548202 (c) MG M2 1547364 (f) MG M2 1547273
 (b) " " 1547387 (g) " " 1547224 (i) " " 1548103
 (e) " " 1548371 (h) " " 1547258 (k) _____
 (d) " " 1547388 (j) " " 1547137 (l) _____
10. PERSONNEL LISTED BELOW REPORTED AS: Battle Casualty, Non Battle Casualty.
11. NUMBER OF PERSONS ABOARD AIRCRAFT: Crew 10; Passengers 0; Total 10
 [If more than 12 persons aboard aircraft, use separate sheet]

CREW POSITION	FULL NAME (Last, first, initials) RANK, SERIAL NUMBER	CURRENT NEXT OF KIN, RELATIONSHIP STATUS AND ADDRESS
1) Pilot	<u>Hoffman, Merle H.</u> 2d Lt., O-826172	RTD (Non-applicable) ✓
2) Co-pilot	<u>Trotter, Carroll D.</u> F/O., T-127299	RTD (Non-applicable) ✓
3) Nav.	<u>Mahota, William J., Jr.</u> F/O., T-127673	RTD (Non-applicable) ✓
4) Babdr.	<u>Weisberger, William</u> 2d Lt., O-2056752	RTD (Non-applicable) ✓
5) BOG	<u>Weber, Alfred H.</u> Sgt., 12086879	RTD (Non-applicable) ✓
6) BOG	<u>McDowell, James C.</u> Sgt., 33248777	RTD (Non-applicable) ✓
7) Eng-gun	<u>Williams, Samuel H.</u> Sgt., 33672007	RTD (Non-applicable) ✓
8) Arm-gun	<u>Denbeck, Raymond A.</u> Sgt., 36596807	RTD (Non-applicable) ✓
9) Gunner	<u>Baumhoyer, Elmer H.</u> Cpl., 37652260	RTD (Non-applicable) ✓
10) Gunner	<u>Smith, William A.</u> Cpl., 36894255	RTD (Non-applicable) ✓
(11)		
(12)		

12. IDENTIFY BELOW THOSE PERSONS WHO ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE LAST KNOWLEDGE OF AIRCRAFT AND CHECK APPROPRIATE [one only] COLUMN TO INDICATE BASIS FOR SAME:
- | NAME IN FULL | RANK | SERIAL No. | CONTACTED LAST BY RADIO | SAW SIGHTED | SAW FORCED CRASH | SAW FORCED LANDING |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------|
| (1) <u>John W. Nance</u> | <u>Lt. Col.</u> | <u>O-790704</u> | <u>"STATEMENT"</u> | | | |
| (2) | | | | | | |
| (3) | | | | | | |
13. IF PERSONNEL ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE SURVIVED, CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:
 Parachutes were used, Persons were seen walking away from the scene of the crash.
 Other reasons [specify] None applicable
14. ATTACH PHOTOGRAPH, MAP OR SKETCH SHOWING LAST KNOWN LOCATION OF AIRCRAFT.
15. ATTACH EYEWITNESS DESCRIPTIONS OF CRASH, FORCED LANDING, OR OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES.
16. ATTACH A DESCRIPTION OF EXTENT OF SEARCH, IF ANY, AND GIVE NAME, RANK AND SERIAL NUMBER OF OFFICER IN CHARGE OF SEARCH HERE. None

2 Enclosures.
 Incl 1-Sketch of w/p. Date 2 March 1945
 pos.
 Incl 2-Statement of C.O.

CONFIDENTIAL

John W. Nance
 Signature of preparing officer
 JOHN W. NANCE,
 Lt. Col., Air Corps,
 Commanding

177



44° 40'

14° 40'

15°

15° 20'

44° 10'

● INDICATES AREA IN WHICH LT. HOFFMAN'S CREW BAILED OUT.

Incl 1

C O N F I D E N T I A L

S T A T E M E N T

On 16 November 1944, Lt. Hoffman and crew were returning from a mission at Vienna, Austria, when they developed mechanical trouble. They were approaching the coast of Yugoslavia when they were forced to bail out. The men landed on the Isle of Pag and were brought together by the Partisans. They were told that the plane had continued and finally cracked up on a mountain.

On 17 November 1944, Lt. Weisberger and Sgt. Dembeck were RTD, and remainder of crew were LIA.

At the present, the complete crew is on duty status in this Squadron, with the exception of Sgt. James C. McDowell who has transferred to the 26th General Hospital, dated 1 December 1944.

John W. Nance
JOHN W. NANCE,
Lt. Col., Air Corps,
Commanding.

~~C O N F I D E N T I A L~~

Encl 42

Williams, Samuel E., Sgt., 33672007, 776 Sq., 464 B. Gp.

no more

APPENDIX F

Entire crew back.

12534

MIL 12071-12534?

CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Your name Carroll De Witt Trotter Rank 2nd. Lt. Serial No. 0 2001999
2. Organization 464 Bomb Gp. Commander Byrd Rank Col. Sqn CO J.W.Nance Rank Lt. Col
3. What year 1944 month November day 16 did you go down?
4. What was the mission, Munich, Germany, target, West Marshalling Yds., target time, Aprax. 1300, altitude, 20,000 ft. route scheduled, See reverse side, route flown See reverse side
5. Where were you when you left formation? At the Northern tip of Adriatic Sea
6. Did you bail out? Yes
7. Did other members of crew bail out? Every member of the crew bailed out
8. Tell all you know about when, where, how each person in your aircraft for whom no individual questionnaire is attached bailed out. A crew list is attached. Please give facts. If you don't know, say: "No Knowledge". All members of crew effected successful bail outs, landing on the island of Pag off the coast of Yugoslavia. We were picked up by Partisans who cared for our wounded, and made contact with a British ship, HMS Lauderdale, which brought us back to Ancona, Italy two days later. All members of the crew being alive.
9. Where did your aircraft strike the ground? See reverse side
10. What members of your crew were in the aircraft when it struck the ground? (Should cross check with 8 above and individual questionnaires) None
11. Where were they in aircraft? No members aboard when ship crashed
12. What was their condition? ---
13. When, where, and in what condition did you last see any members not already described above? _____
14. Please give any similar information on personnel of any other crew of which you have knowledge. Indicate source of information. All crew members of that mission. Have returned to states since. I have corresponded with them

(Any additional information may be written on the back)

4. I do not remember the exact route flown that day. We made landfall at the North end of the Adriatic and came on the target on a heading of 180 degrees.

9. To my knowledge no member saw the ship crash and the only information we have is what some of the islanders told us. They said they saw the ship crash into the mountains on the mainland of Yugoslavia near the island of Pag.

8. All members bailed out over this same island of Pag, and everybody left the ship through the bomb bays except the navigator and nose gunner who left through the nose wheel door. The ship was a B-24. I was co-pilot.

CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

15071?
025-342
02001998

1. Your name William J. Mahota Jr. Rank 2nd Lt. Serial No. 02001998
Bomb Group John
2. Organization 464 Gp Commander Byrd Rank Col. Sqn CO Nance Rank Lt. Col.
(full name) (full name)
3. What year 1944 month November day 16 did you go down?
4. What was the mission, Bombing (4th), target, Munich, target
time, 1315, altitude, 29,000 ft route scheduled, Pantenella AF,
Foggia, Udine, Linz, I.P., route flown Same
Munich
5. Where were you when you left formation? Over Munich
6. Did you bail out? Yes
7. Did other members of crew bail out? Yes, everyone in the plane (10)
8. Tell all you know about when, where, how each person in your aircraft for whom no individual questionnaire is attached bailed out. A crew list is attached. Please give facts. If you don't know, say: "No Knowledge". Everyone bailed out at about 1430, from their respective positions, over enemy held territory 30 miles north of Zara in Pago Island off Yugoslavia.
9. Where did your aircraft strike the ground? In the mountains on coast of yugo-
slavia
10. What members of your crew were in the aircraft when it struck the ground? (Should cross check with 8 above and individual questionnaires) None
11. Where were they in aircraft? _____
12. What was their condition? _____
13. When, where, and in what condition did you last see any members not already described above? Regrouped after bailing out and was transported to base through the aid of the British and the Underground
14. Please give any similar information on personnel of any other crew of which you have knowledge. Indicate source of information. None

(Any additional information may be written on the back)